Insulin is a protein that is secreted by the pancreas (an endocrine organ) when blood sugar levels are high. Insulin acts on many distant target cells, such as leg muscles and brain tissue, by binding to and activating a membrane transport protein, leading to a reduction in blood-sugar levels by appropriately importing and storing sugars in the body tissues. Diabetes is a disease in which blood-sugar levels remain high because some aspect of the insulin pathway is defective. One kind of diabetes (let’s call this type A) can be treated by giving the patient insulin. Another kind of diabetes (call it type B) is not affected by insulin treatment.

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